

ECONOMIC TOURS IN ISRAEL

Petrică ȘTEFAN, Alexandru FÎNTÎNERU

University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Bucharest, 59 Marasti, District 1, 11464, Bucharest, Romania, Phone: 00 40 74 36 44 744, E-mail: stefanmarian2004@yahoo.com, alexandru.fintineru@gmail.com

Corresponding author: stefanmarian2004@yahoo.com

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is the economic promotion of tourism circuit between Romania (Bucharest) and Israel (Tel Aviv and Jerusalem), unique and blessed area in the world because here was born the Lord Jesus Christ and also our religion: Christianity. It wants also presenting significant sights in Israel which, financially, would be visited at very competitive rates for Romanian tourists, making, in this way, important discounts.

Key words: economy, financial, promotion, tourism, tourists

INTRODUCTION

Israel, officially *the State of Israel*, is a country in Western Asia, situated at the southeastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It shares land borders with Lebanon to the north, Syria in the northeast, Jordan on the east, the Palestinian territories comprising the West Bank and Gaza Strip [17] on the east and southwest, respectively, and Egypt and the Gulf of Aqaba in the Red Sea to the south. It contains geographically diverse features within its relatively small area. [7][8] Israel's financial center is Tel Aviv, [11] while Jerusalem is the country's most populous city and its designated capital, although Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem is not recognized internationally. [10]

On 29 November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly recommended the adoption and implementation of the Partition Plan for Mandatory Palestine. The end of the British Mandate for Palestine was set for midnight on 14 May 1948. That day, David Ben-Gurion, the Executive Head of the Zionist Organization and president of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, declared "the establishment of a Jewish state in *Eretz - Israel*, to be known as the State of Israel," which would start to function from the termination of the mandate.[11][12][13] The borders of the new state were not specified.

Neighboring Arab armies invaded the former Palestinian mandate on the next day and fought the Israeli forces.[14][15] Israel has since fought several wars with neighboring Arab states,[11] in the course of which it has occupied the West Bank, Sinai Peninsula (1956–1957, 1967–1982), part of South Lebanon (1982–2000), Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. It annexed portions of these territories, including East Jerusalem, but the border with the West Bank is disputed. [17][18][19] Israel has signed peace treaties with Egypt and with Jordan, but efforts to resolve the Israeli–Palestinian conflict have so far not resulted in peace. [6]

The population of Israel, as defined by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, was estimated in 2014 to be 8,904,373 people. It is the world's only Jewish-majority state; 6,110,600 citizens, or 75.3% of Israelis, are Jewish. The country's second largest group of citizens are designated as Arabs, with 1,686,000 people (including the Druze and most East Jerusalem Arabs).[21][22] The great majority of Israeli Arabs are settled Muslims, with smaller but significant numbers of semi-settled Negev Bedouins; the rest are Christians and Druze. Other minorities include Maronites, Samaritans, Dom people, Black Hebrew Israelites, other Sub-Saharan Africans, [23] Armenians, Circassians, Roma and others. Israel also

hosts a significant population of non-citizen foreign workers and asylum seekers from Africa and Asia.

In its Basic Laws, Israel defines itself as a Jewish and Democratic State. [3] Israel is a representative democracy with a parliamentary system, proportional representation and universal suffrage. [2] The Prime Minister serves as head of government and the Knesset serves as Israel's legislative body. Israel is a developed country and an OECD member, [24] with the 43rd-largest economy in the world by nominal gross domestic product as of 2012. The country has the highest standard of living in the Middle East and the fifth highest in Asia, [24] and has one of the highest life expectancies in the world. [1][9]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Israel is considered one of the most advanced countries in Southwest Asia in economic and industrial development. In 2010, it joined the OECD. [26] The country is ranked 3rd in the region and 38th worldwide on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index as well as in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report. [24] It has the second-largest number of startup companies in the world (after the United States) and the largest number of NASDAQ-listed companies outside North America. [23]

In 2010, Israel ranked 17th among the world's most economically developed nations, according to IMD's World Competitiveness Yearbook. The Israeli economy was ranked as the world's most durable economy in the face of crises, and was also ranked first in the rate of research and development center investments. [24]

The Bank of Israel was ranked first among central banks for its efficient functioning, up from 8th place in 2009. Israel was also ranked as the worldwide leader in its supply of skilled manpower. The Bank of Israel holds \$78 billion of foreign-exchange reserves. [24] Despite limited natural resources, intensive development of the agricultural and industrial sectors over the past decades has made Israel

largely self-sufficient in food production, apart from grains and beef. Imports to Israel, totaling \$77.59 billion in 2012, include raw materials, military equipment, investment goods, rough diamonds, fuels, grain, consumer goods. Leading exports include electronics, software, computerized systems, communications technology, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, fruits, chemicals, military technology, and cut diamonds. In 2012, Israeli exports reached \$64.74 billion. [24]

- ITINERARY: Bucharest - Tel Aviv - Haifa - Caan – Tiberias - Nazareth - Capernaum - Tabgha – Tiberias - River Jordan - Bethlehem - Jerihon - Dead Sea - Ein Karem - Jerusalem - Bucharest
- Price: from 500 euros/ person
- Duration: 7 days
- Departures: 13.06.2014, 10.10.2014.
- Total distance traveled by plane: 3191km

Visit Stella Maris Monastery, the altar above the cave lie Tishbite prophet. We look Bahai Temple Cult, church sits on the site of the house of Simon the Zealot, where he spent the miracle of transforming water into wine. Nazareth. We visit *Mount of Beatitudes*, the Catholic Church where Jesus made *multiplication of loaves and fishes miracles* [20].



Fig. 1. Israel map

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Price Analysis

Services included (for 500 euro/person).

- Transport tickets Bucharest - Tel Aviv - Bucharest with the company El Al;
- Assistance (Tel Aviv) at the airport on arrival;
- 6 nights' accommodation with breakfast at 3 and 4 stars hotels: 2 nights in Tiberias, 2 nights in Bethlehem, 2 nights in Jerusalem;
- Modern bus transportation (air conditioning) for execution of the program;
- Inputs to the objectives specified in the program;
- Local guides - Romanian speaking the main objectives in Bethlehem and

Services not included

- Airport taxes (obligatory): 145 Euro / person (subject to change)
- Shuttle bus Mount Tabor (required): 5 EURO/person
- Tips (compulsory in Israel): 30 EURO / person (for local guides, drivers, restaurants and hotels) are paid on the spot local agency representative,
- Medical insurance: 10-20 EURO
- Cancellation insurance (optional end with signing the package holiday trading)

Total approximate price: 695 EURO/person.

To qualify for discounts, trip must be paid in full upon registration [28].

Overview itinerary

Day 1: Bucharest - Tel Aviv - Haifa - Caan – Tiberias.

Meeting at Otopeni International Airport “Henri Coanda” at 8 o'clock with attendant group. After customs formalities, boarding the El Al flight bound for Tel Aviv, departing at 10:45; landing at Ben Gurion Airport at 1:20 p.m. Continue on the shore of the Mediterranean to Haifa, splendid port city, located in a large bay at the foot of Mount Carmel. Visitation Monastery Stella Maris (Star Sea), the altar lie above the cave Proorocului Tishbite . We look Bahai Temple Cult, with garden terraces suspended. Arrive at Tiberias, dinner and overnight at Hotel Baal four.

Day 2: Tiberias - Nazareth - Capernaum -

Tabgha - Tiberias

After breakfast, Departure to Cana, where we will visit the church sits on the site of the house of Simon the Zealot, where he spent the miracle of transforming water into wine. Nazareth. Visit the Orthodox Church of St. Gabriel the source of Mary, painted in 1977 by brothers Morosanu Annunciation Catholic Church, the largest religious building in the Middle East. Mount Tabor. Visiting Greek Orthodox Church, built on the site where it happened Transfiguration (minibus transfer: 5 Euro/ person, to be paid to the agency). Departure to Capernaum - called City of God. Visit the famous place where Jesus preached, the Holy House. Peter, Tabgha, where Jesus multiplying the loaves and fishes and made in this way a miracles. Mount of Blessing, visit the Catholic Church. Depending on time and temperature, optional ride - Cruising with a copy of "Jesus boat" on the waters of Galilee (target price: 10 EUR/ person) and visit Capris - factory gold and diamonds. Overnight at hotel with 4* in Tiberias.

Day 3: Tiberias - River Jordan - Bethlehem

Breakfast. Descend on the river Jordan to the Yarden, arranged place of Baptism. We enter in the future Palestinian state, visiting in Bethlehem Nativity Church and Crypt “where God became man” for our salvation (here is an icon of the Virgin Mary "guard Bethlehem" miracle). Continue to St. Catherine Roman Catholic Church (where the Christmas Liturgy officiate, which airs on the plateau in front of the church and around the world on TV) and the Milk Grotto where the Holy Family to Egypt stopped running. Optionally, continue in the wilderness of Judea to the monastery of nuns of St. Theodosius (sec.VI), shuttle buses Arab in the "heart" of the desert to visit the impressive Monastery of St. Sabbas the Sanctified (IV) consider to be among the oldest in the world with a continuous monastic life, where for centuries women have access. Target price: 10 EUR / person. Go to Jerusalem. Visit Mount Zion, to Church of the Assumption Virgin, Tower “Last Supper” (where it was built the first Christian church in the world), Tomb of the Great King David. Visit the Jewish holy

city, the Cardo ("Boulevard" novel) and the Western Wall. Overnight at Hotel Shepard 4* in Bethlehem.

Day 4: Bethlehem - Jerusalem - Bethlehem
Breakfast. Climb on Mount Scopus to see the top view of the Holy City and the Citadel. *Mount of Olives*. Visit Pater Noster Church ("Our Father"), the Garden of Gethsemane Nations Church, Church of the *Virgin Tomb* and the Cave of Gethsemane. We enter in the city through the Gate of St. Stephen. Scroll down Avie Dolorosa with the 14 stations where Jesus stopped on the Way of the Cross, to the Holy Sepulchre. Climb to Calvary Anointing Stone, visiting holy chapels. Visiting the Romanian church in Jerusalem. Overnight at hotel in Bethlehem (optional 18 € - payment on the trip, gala dinner buffet with drinks and music).

Day 5: Bethlehem - Jerihon - Great Marta
Breakfast. Go to town Jerihon, the oldest city in the world with the opportunity reenter the area "West Bank", the future Palestinian state. Visit the Church and Romanian Hous. Carantania on the Moun, where Jesus was tempted by the devil. Down to Jordan, visit the Greek Orthodox Monastery of St. Gerasimos of Jordan (sec.VI). Continue to the Dead Sea (- 400 m above sea level), the lowest over the world, and we arrive at Qumran (the old center of the Essenes). Short stop at cosmetics shop and restaurant cafeteria. Depending on time, stop at the Dead Sea (30 minutes). Overnight at Hotel Jerusalem Gate 4 in Jerusalem.

Day 6: Ein Karem - Jerusalem
Breakfast. Visit Ein Karem - home of St. John the Baptist. Visitation Church and the crypt where he was born "the greatest man born of a woman". Fountain of the Virgin Mary, the place of meeting his cousin Lady Elizabeth. Tel Aviv, visit the historical area of the city of Jaffa, Greek Orthodox Church of St. Michael and St. Peter Catholic Church. Short walk to the Mediterranean Sea. Return to Jerusalem. Overnight hotel in Jerusalem: *Jerusalem Gate 4*.

Day 7: Jerusalem - Bucharest
Breakfast. Farewell visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Free program by the holy

city. Go to Lud, ancient Lydda visit the Church of St. Gheorghe, where the relics belt and chain that was linked. Continue to Ben Gourion Airport for departure formality for the country. Boarding the El Al flight to Tel Aviv, departing at 18:10. Arrival in Bucharest at 21:00.

Jerusalem

Jerusalem is the most-visited city with 3.5 million tourist arrivals annually. One of the oldest cities in the world, it is the proclaimed capital and largest city of Israel, if the area and population of East Jerusalem are included. It is a holy city to the three major Abrahamic religions-Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and hosts a myriad of historical, archaeological, religious and sundry other attractions. [27]

East Jerusalem was captured by Israel in the 1967 *Six-day War* and considered by the international community as being under Israeli occupation, although it was annexed in 1980 under the Jerusalem Law. It is the location of:

- *The Old City of Jerusalem*, traditionally divided into four quarters: Armenian Quarter, Christian Quarter, Muslim Quarter and Jewish Quarter. Most importantly, the Temple Mount (known in Arabic as Haram ash-sharīf, the Noble Sanctuary), site of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem with only the Western Wall at its foot remaining, and now with the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- *The Mount of Olives and Kidron Valley*: with its lookout point, Tomb of Absalom, and other Jewish tombs and burial grounds dating back 3000 years, and churches, Gethsemane, church of all nations, Dominus Flevit, and the Church of Maria Magdalene (Russian orthodox church). Various locations have been proposed as the Tomb of Jesus, traditionally identified as where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands. Nor has Golgotha, the nearby hill where he was crucified been located. Immediately south of the Jewish Quarter lies the City of David with archaeological digs including Hezekiah's Tunnel. [24]

West Jerusalem was built mainly after the creation of Israel in 1948. Selected tourist attractions within this area are:

- *The German Colony*, a Temple Society settlement, with a colorful mix of architectural styles.
- *Mea Shearim*, established in the nineteenth century and inhabited largely by ultra-Orthodox Haredi Jews.
- *Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum*.
- *Ein Karem*, the traditional birthplace of John the Baptist, is one of the four most visited Christian pilgrimage sites in Israel.[11]
- *Mt. Zion*, the traditional resting place of King David.
- *Mt. Scopus*, site of the Hebrew University and standing at 2710 feet above sea level, offers a panoramic view of the city. Both the Temple Mount and the Dead Sea are visible from this location.

Tel Aviv

With 2.7 million tourist arrivals in 2011, Tel Aviv is Israel's second-largest city, and a cosmopolitan, cultural and financial global city. [21] The city's greater area is the largest with 3 million inhabitants. Tel Aviv exhibits a UNESCO world heritage area of Bauhaus architecture. The nearby historical city of Jaffa is experiencing a touristic boom. In 2010, National Geographic ranked Tel Aviv as one of the world's ten best beach cities.

Tel Aviv is called the "city that never sleeps" by the locals because of its vibrant nightlife scene. Tel Aviv was named "the gay capital of the Middle East" by the Out magazine.

Safed is one of the four holy cities in Judaism, where much of the Jerusalem Talmud was written and kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) was developed. Famous for its artisans. The grave of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai is in nearby Meron. [4]

Akko- Old City and its Knights Hall Place of Bahá'u'lláh as well as a UNESCO world heritage historical town.

Haifa- its terraces, and the World Centre and the buildings (a UNESCO world heritage).

Tiberias - is one of the four holy cities in Judaism, overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

Saint Peter's house at Capernaum, Tabgha and the Mount of Beatitudes.

Nazareth - is known as the 'Arab capital of Israel'. Visit: Nazareth's old city and historical sites around the city; Jesus's hometown and the site of many of his reported acts and miracles; many churches, including The Church of the Annunciation, the largest Christian church building in the Middle East. In Roman Catholic tradition, it marks the site where the Archangel Gabriel announced the future birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-31).

Table 1. The most visited sites

Listing	Site	2008 Visitors ^[5]	2012 Visitors ^[52]
1	Jerusalem Biblical Zoo	687,647	752,000
2	Masada	721,915	724,000
3	Zoological Center of Tel Aviv-Ramat Gan	581,800	713,000
4	Caesarea	713,648	670,000
5	Banias	430,531	561,000
6	Ein Gedi		471,000
7	Hamat Gader	500,000	440,000
8	Yamit 2000 in Holon	412,533	431,000
9	Coral World Underwater Observatory in Eilat	458,000	423,000
10	Qumran	389,291	377,000

Beersheba. Settlement of Beersheba attributed to the patriarch Abraham; regional capital of the Negev desert. It serves as a starting point for exploring such sites as the Ramon Crater or the UNESCO world.

Eilat - Israel's southernmost city, located on the Red Sea coast, is a hot, sunny year-round travel destination. Popular destination for skin and scuba diving, with equipment for hire on or near all major beaches, the Eilat Mountains

are similar to those in Sinai and there are trail roads for hiking, you can also find animals like: Dorcas Gazelle, Rock Hyrax, Stripped Hyena and Nubian Ibex. Eilat has big hotels and various attractions such as camel riding, Kings City and the Eilat's Underwater Observatory Marine Park.

Ashkelon is a city between Gaza City in the Gaza Strip and Ashdod, the city offers many some hotels and Mizrahi Jewish restaurants, there is also a local Arak drink called Arak Ashkelon, pretty famous around Israel.

Tel Ashkelon is a big archaeological site, includes ruins from many different periods such as Canaanites, Philistines, Persians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Muslims and Crusaders.

The sand dunes between Ashkelon to Ashdod and between Ashkelon to the Gaza Strip are popular attractions on this area of the sea coast. [24]

CONCLUSIONS

Tourism, especially religious tourism, is an important industry [5] in Israel, with the country's temperate climate, beaches, archaeological, other historical and biblical sites, and unique geography also drawing tourists. Israel's security problems have taken their toll on the industry, but the number of incoming tourists is on the rebound. [24] In 2013, a record of 3.54 million tourists visited Israel with the most popular site of attraction being the Western Wall with 68% of tourists visiting there. [23]

Israel has the highest number of museums per capita in the world. [25]

A travel agency should always know what are the tourists' *orders* and to create an offer of products and services to be consistent to the tourist market. [16]

So either way planned trip or just weekend, long term or tourist circuit, as in our case, travelers should have as much information about offers and locations to which their attention.

A package tour to Israel can be achieved constantly at good prices for both, tourists and companies promoting this kind of tourism.

REFERENCES

- [1]Barton, John; Bowden, 2004, *The Original Story: God, Israel and the World*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- [2]Ben-Sasson Hayim, 1985, *A History of the Jewish People*. Harvard University Press.
- [3]Bregman Ahron, 2002, *A History of Israel*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [4]Broughton Simon, Ellingham Mark, Trillo Richard, 1999, *World Music: The Rough Guide*. Rough Guides.
- [5]Cretu, R., 2012, *Legislation in catering and tourism* CERES Publishing
- [6]Friedland Roger, Hecht Richard, 2000, *To Rule Jerusalem*. University of California Press.
- [7]Gilbert Martin, 2005, *The Routledge Atlas of the Arab-Israeli conflict* (8th ed.). Routledge.
- [8]Goldreich Yair, 2003, *The Climate of Israel: Observation, Research and Application*. Springer.
- [9]Henderson Robert D'A., 2003, *Brassey's International Intelligence Yearbook* (2003 Ed.). Brassey's Inc.
- [10]Herzl Theodor, 1946, *The Jewish State*. American Zionist Emergency Council.
- [11]Jacobs Daniel, 1998, *Israel and the Palestinian Territories: The Rough Guide* (2nd revised Ed.). Rough Guides.
- [12]Kellerman Aharon, 1993, *Society and Settlement: Jewish Land of Israel in the Twentieth Century*. State University of New York Press.
- [13]Lustick Ian, 1988, *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel*. Council on Foreign Relations Press.
- [14]Mazie Steven, 2006, *Israel's Higher Law: Religion and Liberal Democracy in the Jewish State*. Lexington Books.
- [15]Morçöl Gökтуğ, 2006, *Handbook of Decision Making*. CRC Press.
- [16]Niculaie, A., Foris, T., Cretu, R., 2002, *Tourism Management. Ecotourism-part of modern tourism*, Psihomedica Publishing, Sibiu
- [17]Romano Amy, 2003, *A Historical Atlas of Israel*. The Rosen Publishing Group.
- [18]Skolnik Fred, 2007, *Encyclopedia Judaica* 9 (2nd Ed.). Macmillan.
- [19]Stendel Ori, 1997, *The Arabs in Israel*. Sussex Academic Press.
- [20]Torstrick Rebecca L., 2004, *Culture and Customs of Israel*. Greenwood Press.
- [21] <http://www.ghiduri-turistice.info>
- [22] <http://www.globetravel.ro/-2014/circuit>
- [23] <https://www.google.ro>
- [24] <http://ro.wikipedia.org/>
- [25] <http://www.paralela45luxury.ro/>
- [26] www.infotour.ro
- [27] www.travelontop.ro
- [28] www.travelwiz.ro